The Builder.

SUPPLEMENT, GRATIS.—SATURDAY, OCT. 18, 1845.

RAILWAY HERO-WORSHIP.

"In a commercial country like England," says Mr. D'Israeli, in *Sybil*, "every half century developes some new and vast source of public wealth, which brings into national notice a new and powerful class. A couple of centuries ago, a Turkey merchant was the great creator of wealth; the West Indian planter followed him. In the middle of the last century appeared the nabob. These characters in their zenith in turn merged in the land, and became English aristocrats; while the Levant decaying, the West Indies exhausted, and Hindostan plundered, the breeds died away, and now exist only in our English comedies, from Wycherly and Congreve to Cumberland and Morton. The expenditure of the revolutionary war produced the loanmonger, who succeeded the nabob; and the application of science to industry developed the *manufacturer*, who in turn aspired to be "large-acred," and always will, as long as we have a territorial constitution."

The money-maker of the present day,—a species of the last-named *genus* it may be said,—is the producer of railways and railway shares.

Foremost in this peculiar class of men, who have raised themselves by taking the new field opened for the exercise of energy, shrewdness, and resolution, stands George Hudson, Esq., M.P. for Sunderland, deputy-lieutenant for the county of Durham, owner of several hundred miles of railroad, two fine estates in Yorkshire (one purchased of the Duke of Devonshire, at a price little short of half-a-million), and of so many golden pieces of the current coin of the realm, that he has never yet been able to count them exactly. The progress of this gentleman, from behind the counter of a linen-draper in York to his present eminent position, forms an extraordinary story. We have not much faith in what is called good-fortune, although it is quite certain that events turn out *seemingly*, much better for some men than others, apparently without their control,—and are disposed to give the gentleman in question the credit of having *made* all things succeed in which he embarked, and achieved his own fortune, of course under a Higher power.

With good business habits, a sanguine temperament, determined will (a will which brooks no interference, and has sometimes another name), much shrewdness, and few of those feelings which some people call weaknesses, he at once took the lead in those companies which his passionate desire for speculation led him to join, and at this time reigns absolutely and despotically over the new railway world.

The power of influencing the opinion of others, possessed by Mr. Hudson, affords a striking instance of the *leaning* nature of man, his desire to have a guide,—a hero. The multitude cannot think for themselves, or will not; and are willing to save themselves the trouble by adopting the opinion of one in whom they have faith. To inquire into the merits of a line and decide accordingly, is a more difficult matter than to take up the belief that whatever Mr. A. or Mr. B. enters into must be good and desirable. When Mr. Hudson joins a line the shares rise; his being seen on the site of a proposed railway has an effect on the value of the scrip, and thus the public have vested him with the power of making money without risk or effort. He has but to purchase, at no matter how great a discount, and the next day may sell at a large premium. Companies send deputations, soliciting him to come on the direction, and we hear of enormous grants of shares made to him as an inducement to accede to the request. The career of Law of Lauriston, the projector of the Mississippi scheme, forces itself as a parallel on the recollection. Let us hope Mr. Hudson may never equally abuse the power that public weakness has placed in his hands. At present all goes swimmingly. He is called the Napoleon of railways, the king of railways, the Dictator, Cæsar, and by a dozen other titles, and 18,000*l.* or 19,000*l.* have been subscribed in a very short space of time for a permanent testimony of admiration.

Far is it from our wish to undervalue energy and discrimination wherever exhibited; we cannot, however, avoid contrasting this more than ample demonstration, this piling up of a measure already full,—with the treatment received by men who have, with self-sacrifice, benefitted their fellow-creatures. Mr. Hudson has pushed his trade vigorously and well. We hear of no noble motives, no desire to serve others rather than himself,—he does not pretend to such,—but simply that he has applied himself to carry out schemes in which he had embarked merely to make money, and that he has been successful in his endeavours.

We trust that Mr. Hudson will cause the large amount collected to be applied in a manner that may serve those who need it more than himself, and so indeed render it an honourable testimonial. The foundation and endowment of a series of almshouses for the widows and children of men connected with railways, who may lose their lives in the service of railways, has been suggested, and would seem to be an excellent mode of disposing of the money subscribed.

Hungerford Suspension Bridge.—This bridge has been sold by the proprietors for 226,000*l.*; thus yielding 62*l.* 10*s.* for each share of 25*l.* A deposit of 20,000*l.* is to be paid by the purchasers next week.

RAILWAY TERMINI IN THE CITY.

The reception given by the Court of Common Council to the application from one of the direct London and Manchester Railway Companies, and from the London and Birmingham Company, for leave to purchase respectively the site of Farringdon Market, and the site of the Fleet prison, for termini, leads to the belief that it will not be very long before the inhabitants of the city are enabled to enjoy the advantages of railway travelling without the previous penance in an omnibus, to which they, in common with the greater part of the other inhabitants of the metropolis, are at present subjected. Mr. Lawrance said justly, that if the corporation of this metropolis did not allow railways to come into the city, and establish their termini there, they would go somewhere else; and he would ask the corporation whether they were prepared to say that railway companies should not establish their termini in the city, when they had an opportunity of obtaining convenient accommodation? Farringdon-market had cost the corporation (as we understood) from 150,000*l.* to 200,000*l.*; and up to the present time, leaving the interest of the money out of the question, they had obtained hardly any return for the investment. A proposal was now made to them to take off their hands this unproductive property, and to render it valuable as the terminus of a railway. The situation, from its central position, was peculiarly valuable for such a purpose; it admitted of very easy access, and there was ample accommodation for carriages to wait, or for carts to load and unload, without interfering with the ordinary traffic of the city. If a railway terminus should be formed in Farringdon-street, he considered that it ought not to be confined exclusively to one company, but that it should be open to all companies; but as all could not join in the commencement of such an undertaking, it was necessary that somebody should begin. He understood that a railway company had recently purchased nearly 80 acres of ground at King's Cross. Now, it could not be supposed that such a large quantity of land was required for the railway terminus; and he might observe, that if they did not act cautiously in the city, towns would spring up around the suburban railway stations which would materially and injuriously affect the trade of the metropolis.

Mr. R. Taylor remarked that, with regard to the question of forming railway termini in towns, that he would much rather travel by railway from Paddington to Bath, than by omnibus from London to Paddington. Everybody who had travelled to Bath by that route must know that the omnibus drive from London to Paddington was the most unpleasant part of the journey. He would remind the Court that large hotels and shops were in the course of erection near the Euston-square station, and other railway stations in the vicinity of town, and that people who came by railway from the country took up their abode at those hotels, and became customers to the neighbouring shopkeepers. He could state, that the inhabitants of Farringdon Without would deem it a Godsend to have a railway terminus at Farringdon-market; for the proprietors of the great inns and hotels in the neighbourhood had regretted that a terminus had not been established in that vicinity at a much earlier period."

The question is one of great importance, and

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